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January 28, 2013

OPPOSED TO ALL PROPOSED FIREARMS LEGISLATION

This morning when I left my house I locked the windows and doors. I reminded my children to refrain from “talking to strangers” and when I arrived here at the Capital today I locked my car and activated its alarm. I wish I could have left the windows of my home cracked to let some fresh air in, and the door unlocked so when the kids came home they didn’t have to dig through their bag to find their house key, delaying their entry until it was unlocked. As it is very cold it would be nice to leave here today and jump right in my car without having the delay of finding my keys and unlocking it, but alas I can not.

I can not do these things because I and the rest of the citizens of the State of Connecticut do not live in a “fantasy land” where everything is peaceful and everyone is nice and only too eager to help their neighbor. Sure grand theft auto is against the law, but it happens. Burglary is against the law, but it happens. No amount of laws this body or any other of its kind pass to make people feel good change the fact this is the real world and bad things happen. Bad people ignore the laws you make. I live in Cheshire, my neighbors were slaughtered and as best as I can tell from state publications of the laws you pass, that was illegal as well.

The fact is bad people have always done bad things. History has shown that punishing good people for the sins of evildoers has no effect on those willing to disrespect the laws of fellow man. This is the discussion we are having here today. This is in fact the gist of all the proposals made thus far to limit ammunition capacity and the physical characteristics of firearms available in the State of Connecticut. This is why any action this body takes should be more than just a “feel good” initiative. The proposed bans and restrictions are just that, “feel good” legislation which will have no effect on those that ignore such laws.

Not only does the second amendment of the Bill of Rights guarantee an individual the right to keep and bear arms, so does our very own State Constitution, Article 1, SEC. 15 which reads as follows: “Every citizen has a right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state.” This individual right has been reinforced by recent Supreme Court cases as well. The laws you are proposing, such as ammunition capacity limits are directly in contravention of this right. Legally they are arbitrary and capricious. You propose to restrict capacity to seven rounds. No where has anyone enumerated the basis of that figure’s relevance. Are we to believe that you wish the people of the State of Connecticut to believe that only the 8th or the 9th or the 10th bullet is dangerous? Why seven? This proposal is one that has been arbitrarily defined and is such a capriciously devised proposal it is “text book” for the type of legislation for which you swore an oath not to impose upon the people you represent.

This leads me into the larger proposal against “military” style arms being available to the public. As elected officials you are obligated to educate yourself to the fact that such type of weapon is in fact NOT available to the public. The nomenclature “military” style is tantamount to

marketing terms such as “big mac” “big gulp” or “whopper”. That really means hamburger, soda and hamburger. All rifles which operate on a semi-automatic principal, which has been industry standard for over 100 years and is nothing new, is the type of weapons at issue presently. The function of such machines has remained unchanged in over 100 years.

Educate yourselves before performing the duties of your sworn office by learning about such things. You owe that to yourselves and to us as your constituents. That is your oath. You swore to uphold both the Federal and the State Constitution upon taking office. That means you swore to respect and abide by such articles as the Second Amendment and our own State provisions protecting our right to arms. You swore to do this whether you personally believed in them or not.

Connecticut is known as the “Constitution State”. If you ignore those principles as referenced above and pass arbitrary feel good legislation in direct contravention of our enumerated rights then you are violating the oath you took and destroying all for which we have been founded upon. There are many alternatives that can address the tragedy that occurred last year. These include opening up NICS to the public, improvements to the mental health system, and renewed approaches to school security. I urge you to keep an open mind when reviewing all these proposals and remain ever vigilant of the duty you swore to uphold our constitutional rights.

I thank you for your time and attention and wish you grand illumination in performing the task at hand.

Respectfully,

Thomas E. Pinkham